

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A chuck to hold an object by electrostatic force, the chuck comprising a dielectric member, the side of the dielectric member facing the object provided with a plurality of pins having a conductive layer on the surface in contact with the object, the conductive layer having a specific resistivity less than $10 \Omega\text{m}$.
2. (Original) A chuck according to claim 1, wherein the conductive layer is less than 200 nm thick.
3. (Original) A chuck according to claim 1, wherein the conductive layer is non-metallic.
4. (Original) A chuck according to claim 1, wherein the pins are conducting pins which penetrate the depth of the dielectric member and are connected to a conducting member.
5. (Original) A chuck according to claim 1, wherein the pins are conducting pins mounted on the surface of the dielectric member facing the object.
6. (Original) A chuck according to claim 1, wherein the thickness of the dielectric member is 50 to 200 μm .
7. (Original) A chuck according claim 1, wherein the surface area of the pins which is in contact with the object is less than 4% of the total area of the dielectric member.
8. (Original) A chuck according to claim 1, wherein the pins project 2 to 10 μm from the surface of the dielectric member.
9. (Original) A chuck according to claim 1, wherein the pins are between 0.15mm to 0.5mm in diameter.

10. (Original) A chuck according to claim 1, wherein the pins are 2 to 15 mm apart.

11. (Original) A chuck according to claim 1, wherein the surface of the dielectric member facing the object is provided with a conductive layer.

12. (Original) A chuck according to claim 1, wherein the object is at least one of:

- a substrate used in lithographic projection techniques; and
- a lithographic projection mask or mask blank in at least one of a lithographic projection apparatus, a mask handling apparatus, and a mask manufacturing apparatus.

13. – 29. (Canceled)

30. (New) A chuck according to claim 4, further comprising an electrode configured to create a potential difference across the dielectric member of the chuck to generate a clamping force, the electrode insulated from the conducting pins and the conducting member.

31. (New) A chuck according to claim 1, further comprising an electrode configured to create a potential difference across the dielectric member of the chuck to generate a clamping force.

32. (New) A chuck according to claim 31, wherein the electrode is configured to alternate a polarity of the potential difference across the dielectric member to reduce charge build up.

33. (New) A chuck according to claim 32, wherein the electrode is configured to change the polarity each time an object is clamped to the chuck.

34. (New) A chuck according to claim 1, further comprising a sensor configured to measure a charge migration within the dielectric member.

35. (New) A chuck according to claim 34, wherein the sensor comprises an electrode within the dielectric member and a controller configured to control an applied potential difference across the dielectric member.

36. (New) A chuck according to claim 1, further comprising a control system configured to provide a reverse potential difference when the object is released from the chuck to dissipate built up charge.

37. (New) A chuck according to claim 1, further comprising a first electrode configured to create a positive potential difference across the dielectric member of the chuck and a second electrode configured to create a substantially equal but negative potential difference across the dielectric member of the chuck.

38. (New) A chuck according to claim 37, wherein the chuck is of substantially circular shape and the first and second electrodes are substantially semi-circular.

39. (New) A chuck according to claim 37, wherein the first and second electrodes are configured in an arrangement of interlocking fingers, a Greek key pattern, concentric rings or concentric spirals.

40. (New) A chuck according to claim 1, further comprising a conductive layer disposed on the side of the dielectric member facing the object but not configured to be in contact with the object.